

Vermont  
Workforce Development Council

Executive Committee Notes  
November 13, 2006

Review of WIA Annual Report to USDOL - Tom Douse handed out copies of the performance report and reviewed the performance numbers. VDoL achieved or exceeded all goals except for the percentage of customer satisfaction surveys. Those that were received indicated good levels of satisfaction, however the rate of response was below what US DoL requires. Chip noted that meeting these goals is a significant achievement considering the significant staff reductions that VDoL has experienced. Fran commented that in his experience it was most effective to ask participants to complete the satisfaction surveys immediately at the end of training as a requirement for completion. It was also suggested that there might be some sort of incentive that could be offered for respondents.

Workforce Professional Development Academy Concept - Allan Rodgers joined the meeting and described the Workforce Academy that the VSC is proposing to fund. It will be based on a model developed and implemented by the University of Virginia that Allan has experience with. The intention is to;

- 1) expose participants to new ideas through national speakers
- 2) promote discussion on key topics
- 3) build collaborative solutions
- 4) Develop an action plan

This will be supported with some of the "One-time" funds that the VSC received from the Legislature. There would be two intensive one-week sessions consisting of 20 - 25 participants each. These would be leaders in the system at the state and local level and be drawn from a wide range of organizations with an interest in workforce issues. Allan asked if the WDC could assist by

recommending participants. Chip and Pat will develop a list and forward it to Allan. Allan also shared their plans to hold some sector focus groups of employers in Healthcare, IT and Construction. Chip participated in a dry run of this process last spring, and believes it produced some valuable results. The Committee agreed to support this effort as long as it ties in with and compliments the sector efforts of the WDC and other partners. Mike Quinn suggested that we begin the process by developing a problem statement that we would work to solve and that we take the temperature of the group on certain key topics at the beginning and again at the end of the process to document the results. Pat offered to have Andy Condon do a presentation on workforce data at the beginning of the session/

Proposed GBIC Employer Survey - Frank shared a draft of the employer survey that GBIC plans to distribute. It assesses employer training needs and would be distributed statewide using a list provided by Vermont Business Magazine. Chip and Pat agreed to look over the list and provide feedback. Pat will also speak to Andy Condon about any of the data in the survey that might be available from the VDoL database. Frank would like to involve the WDC, DED and VDoL in publicizing the results of the survey and the Committee agreed that this is a good idea.

Champlain College IT employer focus group outcomes - Chip provided a handout on the results of the IT employer focus group organized by Champlain College. This was an excellent model that produced some very interesting information. It seems to be a fast growing sector that is diverse and rapidly evolving. Several factors seem to dictate the future of this very desirable industry. 1) a desirable location from a quality of life perspective, 2) an available qualified workforce, 3) housing costs, relating to their ability to attract workers not available locally. There is a strong feeling among the employers that State Govt. does not understand or appreciate the current economic impact and future potential of this industry.

Fall Council Meeting - Chip reviewed the agenda for the meeting He has confirmed that Bill Stenger will attend and the Commission's report will be finalized the previous day. It was agreed to invite Speaker Symington, however it turned out subsequently that she is not available due to a commitment at her job. The Governor's participation is pending. A number of people have asked to attend, and a lively discussion is expected. The Committee decided to organize the small breakout groups by random selection and to assign the each the same questions; considering what we have just learned about the workforce and the finding of the Commission, what barriers and what opportunities do we see?